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GOVERNOR O'MALLEY ANNOUNCES CRITICAL REFORMS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE SERVICES

*Makes Historic Investment to Improve Public Safety; Dedicates \$200 Million for the Construction
of Four New Smaller, More Secure Facilities for Youth*

BALTIMORE, MD (January 18, 2008) – Governor Martin O'Malley, joined by Baltimore County Executive Jim Smith, Department of Juvenile Services Secretary Donald DeVore, and other local elected officials, today announced the allocation of \$200 million for the construction of two new treatment facilities and two new detention centers for the Department of Juvenile Services.

This announcement comes one week after Governor O'Malley announced his continuing effort to improve public safety by allocating \$1 million in the FY 2009 budget for the purchase of GPS Electronic Monitoring equipment to monitor, track, and supervise 200 of the State's most at-risk juvenile offenders.

"Maryland has an obligation to provide opportunities for treatment that works and to ensure the safety of our youth," said Governor O'Malley. "This has been a monumental year for the Department of Juvenile Services and I am proud to announce the allocation of \$200 million to construct smaller, more secure facilities, taking us one step further to ensuring better care for our children most in need," said Governor O'Malley.

"In the last several years, Maryland has lost local capacity to provide treatment services for its youth," said Secretary DeVore. "This capital plan provides the first and most crucial step in the reformation of our system. We must create the ability to treat more of Maryland's youth here in Maryland. We must create the Maryland Model where detention, treatment, and community services are delivered in the most effective way."

Currently, the State only has one facility, the Victor Cullen Center, located in Frederick County, to house and treat youth who have been ordered by the Court to be placed in a secure residential treatment facility. Due to the limited capacity, the Department of Juvenile Services is forced to send youth out-of-state for treatment and supervision. This practice is costly and ineffective. Studies show that the most successful treatment methods involve the families and communities of these youth. With the newly allocated funds, two treatment facilities, with 48 beds each, will provide the resources needed to treat youth in their own community. The new, smaller facilities will provide more focused treatment and supervision.

In addition, two additional detention centers, with a 48 bed capacity each, will be constructed to replace the old structures that plague the Department of Juvenile Services with continuing safety challenges. “The existing facilities were not designed with the standards and practices used by Juvenile Service agencies throughout the United States to provide good lines of sight, efficient supervision and proper treatment of youth,” stated Secretary DeVore.

Facilities will be strategically located throughout the State to provide a continuum of care within the youths’ communities, providing in-state placements for youth that will enable family involvement and ensure public safety.

For years, the Department of Juvenile Services was a struggling state agency, but last year, under Governor O’Malley’s and Secretary DeVore’s leadership, the Department began the long needed reform by:

- Opening the Victor Cullen Academy, the first new state-run committed program in 25 years;
- Reducing the number of youth in pending placement status, lingering for months without the right services or credit toward release; and
- Joining the fight against violence in Baltimore City by:
 - Partnering with the health department to expand the intensive intervention program, Operation Safe Kids; and
 - Partnering with the police department to identify youth who are a risk to themselves and others.

“Governor O'Malley’s announcement today that he will reverse former Governor Ehrlich’s plan to combine Baltimore County and Baltimore City into one juvenile justice region is welcome news to families in Baltimore County,” stated Baltimore County Executive Jim Smith. “Having a smaller, more secure and effective juvenile facility for youthful offenders in Baltimore County will be a much more effective way to provide young people who face significant challenges with the services they need.”

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